GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4874
ANSWERED ON:12.08.2014
ERADICATION OF SOCIAL EVILS
Dubey Shri Nishikant

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has enacted any law/legislation for the eradication of social evils and superstitious beliefs/practices among the Scheduled Castes and backward sections of the society;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the status of implementation of such laws in the country;

(c) whether inspite of such legislations, the said sections of the society are still steeped in social evils and superstitious beliefs/practices; and

(d) if so, the details thereof along with the remedial steps taken in this regard including awareness campaigns/educative measures taken against such evils/practices in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT)

(a) to (d): The Parliament has enacted the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955, which prescribes punishment for the enforcement of any disability arising from the preaching and practice of `Untouchability`. As the responsibility of implementation of the PCR Act primarily lies with the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations, action is taken by them to effectively implement the Act. Under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, Central assistance is also admissible to them, inter-alia, for awareness generation and incentive for inter-caste marriage where one of the spouses is a member of a Scheduled Caste, to promote social integration and harmony.

As per the data of National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Ministry of Home Affairs, 87 number of cases were registered under the PCR Act during 2013.

The practice of untouchability in the historical perspective is construed as a social evil emanating from caste based prejudices, and manual scavenging is a subhuman expression of the same. The Parliament has enacted the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013) to provide for prohibition of employment as manual scavengers and rehabilitation of manual scavengers and their families. Central Government has revised the Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers for rehabilitation of all manual scavengers identified under the provisions of the MS Act, 2013. The main features of the Scheme include one-time cash assistance, training with stipend and concessional loans with subsidy for taking up alternative occupations, to the target group. There is also a provision of awareness generation among the target group.